5:Lienhardt E-4 (no date) 1954 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Luak in the south, which, in some situations, are politically opposed to each other. These territorial and political divisions are associated, but not coterminous, with two religious divisions which Howell and Thomson call 'sees'.[1] One of these is called Gol Dhiang, and corresponds to the province of Ger and northern Shilluk-land. The other is called Gol Nyikang, and corresponds to Luak and southern Shilluk-land, which Nyikang first settled. These two religious divisions are separated by a stream or inlet of the river, the ceremonial crossing of which by the king-elect forms part of the ceremonies at his installation. The theme of crossing the river, already referred to, is thus repeated in the installation ceremonies for the Shilluk kings, and we find elsewhere how important in Shilluk thought is the crossing from one bank to another. There is, for example, a riddle, the ideas contained in which must seem curious to those for whom the separation of the banks of a river does not have such imaginative value. The riddle asks 'What is a big man, who knows only one bank?' and the answer is 'an island'. Hofmayr explains that an island, unlike the river or the stream, has only one bank.[2] There can thus be no crossing from bank to bank.

Ger and Luak each comprise a number of districts, which are the loose confederacies already mentioned, and seem to have been much modified by Turkish and British rule. It is clear, however, that in the past the really important divisions of Shilluk-land were the religious moieties, Gol Dhiang and Gol Nyikang, and that the boundary between them was the inlet of the river, called Arepejur, which is said to mean 'the gathering of the peoples'. Each of these moieties was divided into settlements. Of these settlements, some of which have given their names to the administrative districts to which they now belong, four were of special traditional importance. These were Muomo and Tonga, guarding the northern and southern marches, and the two settlements divided by the stream Arepejur and facing each other across the boundary between the moieties. The leaders of these latter settlements represented their whole moieties in the election of the Shilluk king, so that in this situation the leader of one settlement was also the leader of Gol Nyikang, and the leader of the other was also the leader of Gol Dhiang.[3] Just north of the boundary between Gol Nyikang and Gol Dhiang, and therefore technically in the northern moiety Gol Dhiang, is the present royal capital, Fashoda. The king's clan seems to be well represented on both sides of the boundary between these moieties.

In describing the Shilluk divisions of their country, it is easy to introduce the notion of an administrative system, with an element of superordination and subordination in the relations between the larger territorial units and

[1] Howell, and Thomson, 1946, p. 75. [2] Hofmayr, 1925, p. 422.

[3] The history of the boundary between northern and southern Shilluk-land has been very confused. The details of this confusion do not affect Shilluk cosmology. Some of the information here given is from Pumphrey, 1941, but the main analysis of the significance of the religious moieties is taken from the way they functioned at the installation of the King Anei Kur, recorded by Howell and Thomson, 1946, and from the analysis given in Evans-Pritchard, 1948.

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the smaller units which they comprise. Such a logical model would be misleading for the interpretation of the significance of the moieties, Gol Nyikang and Gol Dhiang. These seem to function primarily, if not exclusively, in the election of the Shilluk kings, successors to Nyikang. In the election of 1943–4, of which we have a full description,[1] the two leaders of the religious moieties had first to reach agreement upon the successor of the dead king, and their choice was confirmed by a representative of the king's clan, which is not identified with either moiety. An electoral college, representing various settlements of Shilluk-land, then confirmed the choice, which, according to Shilluk custom, had to be one of the princes whose father had already been king. In this case the choice was very limited, and the electoral college at once accepted the proposal made by the leaders of Gol Nyikang and Gol Dhiang. Disagreement between these over the choice of the king is said to have led to fighting between the moieties in the past, and thus to civil war in Shilluk-land.

The division of the kingdom into Gol Dhiang and Gol Nyikang thus becomes effective at the election of the king, and the preliminaries to the installation of the new king do indeed create the division which Nyikang, the king's ancestor, is said to have created in the past.[2] When the leaders of the moieties have reached agreement, there is still a ceremonial opposition between them until the king has actually been installed, when the moieties are again put together in a single kingdom, the kingdom which Nyikang originally united under himself. The Shilluk kings conceive their country as a unity by dividing it into moieties, which separate and then unite, over the election of the king. The theme of the resolution of duality and separateness, perhaps an idea paralleled by that of crossing from one bank to another of the river, in order to make a unity consciously recognized by the Shilluk, may also be seen in other features of the installation ceremonies of 1943. The Shilluk king must be possessed by, or identified with, Nyikang, so that some writers say that he 'incarnates' Nyikang. At the installation ceremonies an effigy of Nyikang is brought from northern Shilluk-land, where Nyikang is said to have disappeared during a dance.[3] There is a mock fight between this effigy, accompanied by the effigies of Dak and Cal, and the king-elect. In this fight the king first retreats from the effigy, is then captured by it, and finally must seize from it a small girl, who plays an important part in the ceremonies. She appears to represent the wife of the king's office and, since the king is to take the place of Nyikang, who represents that office, he must also take the wife. Hostility between the king-

[1] The election may have been considerably modified by European and earlier rule, and the element of election by vote may have been stressed at the expense of a rather different principle, described below (p. 157).

[2] Howell and Thomson, 1946, p. 30. Pumphrey (1941) quotes a story in which the existence of Gol Dhiang, which may well be of later foundation than Gol Nyikang, is attributed to a later Shilluk king, but it is still a king who made it. This seems to refer to an earlier stage in the evolution of the kingship. Here we speak of the kingdom as it was at the election of 1943.

[3] Hofmayr, 1925, p. 45.

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643 elect and the effigy of Nyikang then ceases, and the effigies are returned to their shrines and the king is installed. Thus, in order that the king-elect of the Shilluk shall be understood to have become one with Nyikang, separation and opposition between him and the effigy of Nyikang are created and resolved after fighting in mock battle. This resolution of the separateness 182 of the king-elect and Nyikang is also a unification of the moieties of the 643 Shilluk kingdom for, in the mock fighting, Gol Nyikang supports the king-elect, while Gol Dhiang supports the effigy of Nyikang. Here again 631 Nyikang and the Shilluk king may be seen to represent the principle by 616 which the whole Shilluk kingdom is differentiated into parts, and by which these parts are again comprehended in a whole. In the installation of the new king the unity and integrity of the Shilluk kingdom under Nyikang and the king are stressed at the same time as the *necessary* nature of its parts. The uniting of the parts is not then a function of their subordination to a larger national whole, to which their rights to separate existence are surrendered.[1] It is a function of the acceptance by all of Nyikang and the king, through whom are understood the notions of unity in diversity, which have here been briefly discussed.

The Concept of Juok (God)

182 There is a Shilluk proverb which says that 'the Shilluk customs come 776 from Nyikang',[2] and I have preferred to suggest something of the general significance of Nyikang, rather than to exemplify in detail all the customs which the Shilluk say are derived from him. For, in saying that their customs derive from Nyikang, the Shilluk are speaking both of an original and supposedly historical king, and of complex notions of order and permanence which form what we should have to call a metaphysical system. When the Shilluk make an ideal correlation, whether of parts of the body social, or parts of Shilluk-land, or parts of the natural physical ambient, they introduce the concept of Nyikang. By reference to him they make the most inclusive summary of the detailed order of their world and grasp that order in a single term.

776 Nyikang is necessary for the Shilluk understanding of their social and spatial categories, but he does not explain his own existence, nor the grounds for the reality which, for the Shilluk, he ordered in the categories by which they comprehend it. The nature of that reality is understood through the notion of *juok*, God, to which I now turn. It has already been said that the Shilluk explain the superiority and dominance of foreigners by a pre- [773] ference shown them by *juok*. In Shilluk story it is *juok*, not Nyikang, who created the world, and *juok* is the being who maintains it and informs it in its entirety. We have so far considered, in the Shilluk understanding of Nyikang, a notion by which a wide range of phenomena are comprehended in their interrelations and explained; to that extent we have

[1] In contradistinction to some European theories of the nation-state.
[2] Hofmayr, 1925, p. 376.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
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643 We did not witness the selection of the bead. During the *reth*'s stay
[778] at Debalo the period of amnesty for adulterers and seducers, which is mentioned by Munro, comes into effect. Adulterers and seducers of unmarried girls are able to avoid the full legal consequences of their
[684 sins by paying a small fine in goats and sheep to the *reth*. A few
696] Shilluk took advantage of this, and some thirty sheep and goats were brought in.

During the period of semi-seclusion, apart from the preparation, both parties remained comparatively inactive. After three days all was ready for the final and public phases of the installation ceremonies.

The Installation Ceremonies.

631 The conventional opposition between the northern and southern
643 divisions, of the country Gol Dhiang and Gol Nyikang, now becomes
616 clearer. The boundary between them is the watercourse called Arepejur, which means "the gathering of the peoples", and which lies about half a mile to the south of Fashoda. Headed by the chief of Gol Nyikang, chiefs, warriors and headmen had been flocking in to Debalo to join forces with the *reth*-elect, and it is their traditional duty to guard him and to support him in his struggles with Nyikang. Nyikang has taken up residence at Adodo a few miles north of Fashoda, and the people who live north of the boundary muster to his aid. The three days semi-seclusion of the *reth* at Debalo and Nyikang at Adodo is thus primarily a period of preparation for the mock battle to come. The march of the *reth* from Debalo and Nyikang from Adodo and their meeting on the high ground above Arepejur symbolises the ceremonial division of the country into two moieties. The balance between them is strongly emphasized at all points. Nyikang must have his shield borne by a special bearer; so must the *reth*. Certain ritual objects, spears, beads, and the like must accompany the *reth*; others must be carried with Nyikang. Moreover, the joining in battle of the two parties, the capture of the *reth*, and the subsequent rites and ceremonies is an occasion in which all classes and sections of the Shilluk participate, and the formal election and installation of the new

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
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reth is ceremonially impressed upon the minds of all his people. It is the occasion when the *reth* is formally recognized by the Shilluk as a whole. The public nature of the ceremony must be emphasized because prior to it, only limited sections of society—Kwareth, Ororo and the Colo chiefs—have been concerned.

The ceremonies which are enacted on this day are divided into four distinct phases with a variety of ritual observance in each :-

1. The simultaneous march of the opposing armies to the high ground immediately south-west of Fashoda, and the mock battle which follows.
2. The capture of the *reth* by Nyikang, and the procession to the shrine of Nyikang in Fashoda.
3. The enthronement of the effigy of Nyikang on the sacred stool, the substitution of the *reth* for Nyikang on the stool, and the possession of the *reth* by the spirit of Nyikang.
4. The retirement of the *reth* into the temporary camp, which is specially built for the occasion on the open ground immediately facing the shrine.
5. The ritual lighting of new fire by the Ororo and Kwareth just before sundown.

The first two phases are public and concern the tribe as a whole. The third phase, which retains a degree of mystery, is witnessed by limited sections of the population from outside and is screened even from them by a canopy. The *reth's* retirement into the temporary camp concerns him and certain traditional functionaries alone, and the rites which follow are carried out in strict secrecy. The fire-making ceremony concerns chiefly the inhabitants of Fashoda and the *reth's* immediate followers.

The main events of each phase are described from the records of all the observers who attended. We have deliberately avoided an over-detailed description of the events and behaviour of the participants,

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Such was the atmosphere as Nyikang left for home after his thirtieth installation. 643 778

NOTES

1. The Great Divisions of the Shilluk Kingdom. The Shilluk kingdom is divided into two parts in two different ways. An archaic religious division into two "sees" called Gol Nyikang (south) and Gol Dhiang (north) seems only to be important on ceremonial occasions such as the installation of the *reth* or the rebuilding of Fashoda. Each "see" has one ceremonial chief. 631 616

Investigation has shown that these two "sees" are not coterminous with the two great temporal provinces of Gerr and Luak. The traditional boundary between Gerr (northern province) and Luak (southern province) is some 15 miles south of Fashoda between the sections of Both and Fathau. The sections from Both northwards to Yoiny are small sections composed of a succession of small villages, which the Shilluk liken to the beads of an ostrich eggshell necklace and call collectively Wirek (an ostrich eggshell necklace).

In the 19th. century there was opposition between Gerr and Luak over rival candidates for the *reth*ship, when the Turkish Government tried to get Ajang accepted as *reth*, and between Akol and Kur, Gerr supporting Ajang and Kur, and Luak supporting Kwikwon and Akol. 616 631 669 643

When the two great provinces mobilized against each other for civil war, for their organization is primarily military, the small sections of Wirek were overawed or defeated by the forces of Luak, though they should have mobilized with Gerr, and they turned traitor.

After *reth* Kur returned from Omdurman and defeated the forces of Akol (Luak and Wirek) and exiled Akol, the old boundary was restored, and Wirek returned once more to Gerr.

This is one of the few occasions when we diverge from Pumphrey's account of the Shilluk *S.N.R.* Vol. 24 p. 27 ("The Shilluk Tribe"). The distinction between the two sets of divisions becomes clearer when dealing with an occasion such as the installation of the *reth*. [114]